

Who's at Risk?

There are certain factors that contribute to Dry Eye Syndrome, although both men and women of any age may experience it.

Aging:

Advancing age is the single most important risk factor for Dry Eye.* **Dry Eye Syndrome affects 75% of people over the age of 65.**



Women:

Hormonal changes brought on by **pregnancy, lactation, oral contraceptives, menstruation, and post menopause** can cause dry eye conditions.

Disease:

Several diseases and their treatments/medications can be associated with Dry Eye Syndrome: **Rheumatoid Arthritis, Diabetes, Thyroid Abnormality, Asthma, Glaucoma, Lupus, and Rosacea.**

Medications:

Certain medications can decrease the body's ability to produce lubricating tears: **Anti-Depressants, Decongestants, Antihistamines, Blood Pressure Medication, Oral Contraceptives, Diuretics, Ulcer Medication, Tranquilizers, Beta Blockers, and Incontinence Therapies.**

Contact Lenses:

Dry Eye is the leading cause of contact lens discomfort or intolerance. Soft contacts, in particular, rapidly evaporate the tears from the eye, causing irritation, protein deposits, infection, and pain.

Environmental Conditions:

Exposure to **Air Pollution, Wind, Heaters, Air Conditioning, and Dry Climates** can increase tear evaporation.

Computer Users:

Computer users spend hours staring at their terminal and blink less frequently which is a vital function of tear production.

Refractive Surgery:

Candidates considering refractive surgery—i.e., RK, PRK, LASIK, LTK—should consult their eyecare professional regarding any dry eye risks associated with the procedure.

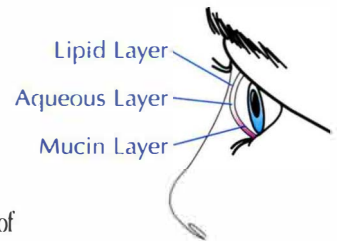
*Data on file

What is Dry Eye Syndrome?

Dry Eye Syndrome is actually a **collection of symptoms** that make up an eye condition that stems from an imbalance in **the quantity or the quality of tears.** These symptoms include dry, red, gritty and even watery eyes. Often, dry eye sufferers report the feeling of something foreign within the eye or eye strain.

How Do Tears Function?

Tears bathe and lubricate the eyes. **New tears are formed in the several glands located around each eye and are spread over the eye each time you blink.** A healthy tear film consists of a delicate balance of three layers:



- **Outer Lipid (Oily) Layer** - Reduces evaporation of the watery layer of tears.
- **Middle Aqueous (Watery) Layer** - 98% water, cleanses the front surface of the eye.
- **Inner Mucin (Mucus) Layer** - Stabilizes the tear film.

What Causes Dry Eye Syndrome?

The moisture level in the eye is maintained by the balance of tear production and tear loss through drainage and evaporation. **When this balance is not sustained, dry spots appear on the eye's surface and cause irritation.**

Can Watery Eyes Be a Symptom of Dry Eye Syndrome?

Yes. As odd as it sounds, many dry eye sufferers experience "wet eye" due to the tear glands over-producing watery or reflex tears to compensate for lack of a balanced tear film.

Can Dry Eye Harm My Eyes?

Yes. If untreated, severe Dry Eye Syndrome can damage tissue and possibly scar the cornea of the eye, leading to irreversible, sight threatening conditions.

